



LIFESAVING SOCIETY

The Lifeguarding Experts

Alcohol and Water – A potentially deadly combination

Males are at greater risk of drowning this summer, especially those between the ages of 18 and 34, who have been drinking alcohol and who are not wearing lifejackets while participating in recreational, on-water activities. Alcohol involvement is twice as high among adult male victims than among women, and every summer lives are needlessly lost to drinking-and-boating accidents.

Canadian drowning statistics demonstrate that over 80 percent of Canadian drowning victims are male, and that those aged 18 – 34 are at highest risk.

Even with the recent changes made to several provincial Highway Traffic Acts – providing law enforcement officers with the power to suspend the driver's license, or lay criminal DUI charges against any power boat operator who is found to be over the legal limit of .08 – many boaters still choose to put themselves and others at risk on the water.

It's ironic; the same people who would never drink and drive in their automobiles often have no reservation about drinking and boating. It is this type of behaviour that contributes to a higher number of drowning fatalities. In addition, the effects of alcohol are much greater in a boat and operators need to be extra alert when navigating.

The Lifesaving Society urges all Canadians to assume the same safe behaviour they exhibit in their cars and reserve alcohol refreshments after their boat ride.

Go to www.lifesaving.ca for more safety tips.

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